

Andrew Jackson to Willie Blount, August 29, 1831, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO WILLIE BLOUNT.1

1 Copy. Handwriting of N. P. Trist.

Washington, August 29, 1831.

My D'r Sir, I have recieved your letter of the 8th inst. and sincerely regret to hear of your bad state of Health, which has compelled you to forego a course of medicine to regain it, but I am truly happy to learn from your letter, that your are in a fair way of recovery—for your perfect health and happiness, I send you my best wishes. Of my New Cabinet, you rightly judge. It will harmonize. The member's of it can have no electioneering views that will lead to discord, and if they should I trust I have sufficient energy yet, to put it down. Harmony I will have, it is necessary, for the good of the Country that it should exist, and it must be maintained. The people, not demagogues, placed me hear, not to make *President's* , but to administer the Government, for the prosperity and happiness of the whole. This I will perform agreeable to my best judgement, regardless of all consequences.

It is a source of much gratification to learn that you are pleased with my new Cabinet, and have confidence in it. it has mine fully, and it is to be hoped that we will get on well. The want of harmony in my old Cabinet was a Source of much pain and regret to me, and therefore made its reorganization a matter of necessity.

The magnanimity and patriotism of Mr. Van Buren and Major Eaton, induced them to resign. When this took place, justice to myself, to them and to my Country, compelled

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me to renew the whole. The others ought to have withdrawn on the intimation of the resignation of Van Buren and Eaton without hesitation or complaint, but it seem's the order's of Mr. Calhoun as I beleive forbade this course, as from their own showing, it now appear's from the first, they had secretly combined to drive Majr Eaton from my Cabinet and too, their friend, who was instrumental in bringing Branch and Berrien into it; and from their conduct seem'd to be his most devoted friend's—still they could plot, and combine for his destruction. Being deprived of the talents of Van Buren an[d] Eaton, who I found worthy of every confidence, it would have been very unsafe and imprudent, to have kept those three in my Cabinet, and added two to them, after they had displayed such treachery to me, and who were secretly weilded by Calhoun, and whose whole view was, to bring him into the Presidency regardless of the success of my administration; or the measures I had recommended to Congress.

Never being formed for an incubus in office, or for a tool to corrupt conspirators, I renewed my Cabinet proper, with men of virtue, and of mind, who will join me with an eye single to the public good, leaving the people to make their own President, and elect their own agents, free from any interference by them, and who will not be secretly weilded by Mr. Calhoun to athwart all my measures and acts as mere puppets to exalt him to the height of his ambition, disregarding in the mean time the great interests of our beloved country.

From the expose by Mr Calhoun in his book, it appear's from his course pursued respecting the Seminole campaign that he is capable of much, and great duplicity. he found Mr. Ingham, Branch and Berrien fit subjects for his views, as in the Siminole affair. whilst he was professing friendship and approbation, he was secretly, as it appears thro such agents as these, trying to destroy me. The attempt of these Judas's has failed, and has recoiled upon themselves.? Was there ever greater infamy unfolded? Whilst these men were professing for me the greatest friendship, whilst acting as part of my constitutional advisers, they were taking notes, and holding meetings to reconcile their statements that hereafter they might be able to certify, or swear for each other, as occasion might require, without contradicting each other, and that all might pass for truth.

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Col Johnston's letter, and the contradiction of Berrien in his, and Ingham's statement, has prostrated them forever. and old faithful Pennsylvania, remains as unshaken as a rock, and Virginia stronger than ever. That you may have it in your power to judge correctly of Mr. Calhoun's duplicity, I inclose you for your information, a Copy of Mr. J Rhea's confidential letter to Mr. Munroe, and Judge Overton's statement, which you can take into view, when you read Mr. Calhoun's book containing in part, his correspondence with me, and when you take into view the explanation of his order's, in his letter to Governor Bibb —"that I was authorized to conduct the war as I might judge best"—with what justice he could move, secretly in the Cabinet Council, my punishment, and with what consistency he could do this, when to myself and friends, in his letter's, and speeches, he was professing the warmest friendship for me, and approving all my acts in the Seminole campaign. if there is not ample proof of his duplicity, and I might add depravity, I am a stranger to what constitutes either and I am sure you will agree with me, that the evidence produced by Ingham, Berrien, Duff Green and Co. gives ample evidence of the propriety of my withdrawing my confidence from them, as it was dangerous to have such near me.

I am sir very respectfully your friend.